

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 191861

EXDIS (DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS)FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SAUNDERS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR PEPR EG IS US

SUBJECT: GOI INTEREST IN PARTIAL AGREEMENTS

REF: TEL AVIV 09550

1. WE SENSED FROM BEGIN'S REMARKS ON SADAT'S AL-ARISH/
SANTA KATERINA PROPOSAL THAT ISRAELI THINKING WAS ONCE
AGAIN DRIFTING IN THE DIRECTION OF INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS.
PERHAPS NOT UNDER THAT PRECISE NAME, BUT SOMETHING CON-
SIDERABLY LESS IN EXTENT - AND IN COST - THAN THE KIND
OF SETTLEMENT SADAT HAS BEEN TALKING ABOUT.

2. FOR HIS PART, SADAT AS FAR AS WE KNOW HAS REJECTED
EVERY OVERTURE THAT THE ISRAELIS HAVE MADE IN THAT
DIRECTION. THERE MAY BE SOMETHING HERE AND THERE IN
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WEIZMAN'S TALKS WITH HIM THAT THE ISRAELIS COULD CITE
AS EVIDENCE OF POSSIBLE INTEREST IN A PARTIAL DEAL, BUT
BY THE ISRAELIS OWN ADMISSION - AND CLEARLY FROM THE
ACCOUNTS OF THE WEIZMAN-SADAT TALKS GIVEN US BY THE
EGYPTIANS - SADAT HAS CONSISTENTLY TURNED AWAY ISRAELI
SUGGESTIONS THAT EGYPT AND ISRAEL SETTLE AMONG THEMSELVES
AND LEAVE OUT THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. EVEN IF SADAT

WERE ONE MORNING TO CHANGE HIS MIND (WHICH SEEMS UNLIKELY,
THOUGH WE PROCEED ON THE PREMISE THAT NOTHING CAN BE

RULED OUT) HE WOULD PROBABLY FIND A PARTIAL DEAL MORE
DIFFICULT TO BRING OFF NOW THAN IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN IN
THE EARLIER DAYS OF HIS INITIATIVE WHEN THERE WAS STILL
OPTIMISM IN EGYPT AND MANY PARTS OF THE ARAB WORLD THAT
SOMETHING WAS GOING TO BE ACHIEVED, AND WHEN HE THEREFORE
HAD A FREER HAND.

3. NONE OF THIS IS TO SAY THAT WE RULE OUT A PRIORI OR
IN PRINCIPLE THE IDEA OF PARTIAL AGREEMENTS. AS YOU KNOW
FROM OUR DISCUSSIONS AT LEEDS AND IN LONDON WE HAVE IN
MIND A FALL-BACK APPROACH CENTERED ON THE TERMINATION OF
ISRAELI OCCUPATION, AND ROY WILL BE TAKING THIS UP WITH
BEGIN. THERE MAY BE OTHER AVENUES THAT WE CAN EXPLORE
AS WELL, BUT I THINK THAT WE SHOULD IN GENERAL AVOID
GIVING THE ISRAELIS ANY ENCOURAGEMENT TO PUT HOPE IN THE
PROSPECT OF PARTIAL DEALS. IT IS TOO OBVIOUSLY AN EASY
TEMPTATION FOR THEM. THE MORE THEY THINK A PARTIAL DEAL
IS OBTAINABLE, THE LESS INCENTIVE THEY HAVE TO FACE UP TO
THE HARD DECISIONS THEY KNOW THEY WILL HAVE TO MAKE TO
GET THE KIND OF DEAL SADAT IS OFFERING.

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